*83. [The questioner (Shri Uday Pratap Singh) was absent. For answer *vide* page 22...*infra.]*

Package for jobless farmers in Assam

*84. SHRI URKHAO GWRA BRAHMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that due to heavy flood every year, small and marginal farmers in Assam are suffering serious economic setbacks and the number of such farmers is huge;

(b) whether it is also a fact that number of jobless farmers is increasing every year, resulting in steep decline in agriculture/foodgrain production; and

(c) if so, whether Government have any scheme to extend financial package for the hapless farmers?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (c) Government is aware that the farmers of Assam are adversely affected by flood causing setback to the agricultural production of the State. In such a situation, the State Governments provide various services to the affected farmers including the required relief to them in the event of failure or destruction of crops. Government of India, also supports and supplements the efforts of the State Government through various schemes, programmes along with financial and other supports. Funds are available with the State Government under the Calamity Relief Fund for taking up necessary relief measures in the wake of natural calamities including flood. Government of India and State Governments contribute to these funds in the ratio of 3:1. Additional assistance over and above the Calamity Relief Fund is considered by the Government of India from the National Calamity Contingency Fund in accordance with the established procedures and norms.

2. As per the report received from the State Government, the number of farm families affected by floods during 2007-08 is about 10.04 lakh covering an area of about 4.11 lakh hectares. National Sample Survey Report on Employment and Unemployment situation in India indicates that in Assam of about 74.3% of employed persons in rural areas are in agriculture in 2004-05 against the corresponding figure of 67.7% during 1999-2000 and 79.2% during 1993-94. Thus, employments in agriculture shows a fluctuating trend.

3. From the available information it is observed that food grain production in Assam has shown a declining trend due to climatic aberrations in the recent past. The data of last 5 years is given below.

Estimates of Production of Total Foodgrains/yield of Total Foodgrains

Year	Production of total foodgrains (in 000 Tonnes)	Yield of total foodgrains (Kg./Hectare)
2002-03	3894.0	1417
2003-04	4035.0	1472
2004-05	3618.2	1405
2005-06	3677.8	1416
2006-07(4th advance estimate)	2722	1188

4. Funds allocated in the Calamity Relief Fund of the State of Assam during the years 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08 is as under:-

(Rs. in crore)

Year	Central Share	State Share	Total
2005-06	144.79	48.27	193.06
2006-07	148.97	49.65	198.62
2007-08	153.36	51.12	204.48

5. In addition to above, several programmes including Macro Management for Agriculture, Technology Mission for integrated development of Horticulture in North Eastern States including Assam, National Agricultural Insurance Scheme and Assam Agricultural Competitiveness Project are also being implemented in the State with the aim to help the farmers.

SHRI URKHAO GWRA BRAHMA: Sir, through you, first of all, 1 would like to thank the hon. Minister for giving a detailed reply. He has given sufficient information in his reply. Present situation due to floods in Assam is very much clear from the reply of the hon. Minister. Flood is a perennial problem in Assam. The gravity of the situation can be imagined from the reply of the hon. Minister. In 2007-08. 10.04 lakh farm families have been affected due to floods covering a crop area of 4.11 hectares. Sources from the State Government of Assam reveal that there is steep .decline in growth in agricultural production. In Eighth Plan, agricultural growth in Assam was 1.13 per cent. In Ninth Plan, growth was 0.39 per cent. During the Tenth Plan, it is reported that growth in agriculture in Assam is 0.27 per cent only. 1 would like to know from the hon. Minister regarding the funds being given to the State under the Calamity Relief Fund. State share under this Fund is very huge and it is unbearable for a State like Assam. Would the hon. Minister consider relaxing or releasing the State share? 1 would like to know whether any specific programme has been taken up under the Macro Management of Agriculture and Technology Mission in Assam. -

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: The ratio of financial contribution from the Government of India and the State Government in Calamity Relief Fund is 3:1. Three-fourth share

is provided by the Government of India and one-fourth share is provided by the State Government. This is the uniform policy for the whole country. So, it will be very difficult for me to accept the suggestion to take the responsibility of the State share also. In the second question. which has been asked regarding other scheme, I would like to inform that there are number of schemes which are helping Assam and other North-East States where the financial support has been provided by the Government of India to enhance the agricultural production and to give relief to the farming community.

SHRI URKHAO GWRA BRAHMA: You have a development programme for drought-prone area, namely, Drought Prone Area Development Programme. And, there is commitment in the UPA Common Minimum Programme for Flood Prone Area Development Programme also. Is there any programme under this Flood Prone Area Development Programme for Assam also?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Firstly, the question is regarding floods though I have no hesitation to reply about drought also. Sir, a particular programme has been taken up by the Government of India, and, the Government has set up the National Rainfed Authority which is supposed to take care of rainfed agriculture in the entire country, which includes Assam also. The National Rainfed Authority prepares various types of schemes. It then submits these schemes to various States. There are some schemes which are financially supported by the Government of India, and, that money is available to these Districts. There are three-four major schemes. One is DPAP in which certain numbers of districts have been selected in the entire country, and, the financial support is given by the Government of India and the State Governments. There is another scheme, which is essentially for desert areas like Rajasthan, and, certain financial support has been provided by the Government of India to that type of schemes. The First scheme is applicable to Assam, and, whenever that type of situation arises, we do support the State Government to implement that type of scheme.

श्री अमर सिंह : सभापति महोदय, धन्यवाद । मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से पूछना चाहूंगा कि क्या यह सही है कि बेरोज़गार किसानों के लिए नेशनल रूरल इम्प्लाइमेंट गारंटी योजना के तहत कुछ जिलों में रोज़गार दिया गया है? यदि दिया गया है तो नेशनल रूरल इम्प्लाइमेंट गारंटी योजना के तहत कितने विस्थापित किसानों को, किस प्रतिशत में रोज़गार दिया गया है? क्या असम की तरह इस योजना का क्रियान्वयन देश के अन्य राज्यों में करने की भी आपकी कोई अभिलाषा है?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Sir, this particular scheme is managed by the Ministry of Rural Development and is not exactly under our Ministry. But it is true that more than hundred districts have been selected throughout India. I will not be able to reply as to what is the exact number of the Districts, which have been approved from the State of Assam, but I have no problem in collecting the information from the concerned Ministry and providing it to the hon. Member.

SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Sir, flood in Assam is a perennial and serious problem. For more than fifty years, Assam is suffering and its economy is collapsing every year because of floods. 1 have gone through the reply given by the hon. Minister wherein he has mentioned about certain measures like Calamity Relief Fund. Actually, this Calamity Relief Fund and other relief schemes have been given

for a short period. With one flood, the entire farmers' community suffers for the whole of the year. Sir, it is not only in Assam alone. We have been observing it in parts of Bihar, which is suffering badly for the last few years. Sir, the farmers economy collapses because of floods. Now, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government has proposed to announce certain special packages or special agricultural programmes by which the economy of the farmers can be revamped in the flood-affected areas.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: It is true that there are certain States, especially, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Assam and parts of West Bengal, which are facing regular problem of floods. There are number of proposals which are essentially handled by the Ministry of Water Resources to control this, and, to take corrective action to control the floods and its menace. Regarding agriculture, as I initially said, there are a number of schemes that have been implemented in the State of Assam and other States also. In fact, recently, we have taken up a major scheme under which about Rs. 25,000 crores would be provided for the whole country to enhance the agriculture production, especially wheat, rice and pulses. This particular scheme is also applicable to Assam and a number of districts from Assam have been taken for enhancement of production of rice. So, whatever schemes are available for the rest of the country, those are also available for Assam also.

SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are fully aware that the flood is a tragic incident which occurs every year in our country. It is also a fact that farmers lose their jobs regularly. In the written reply of the hon. Minister, he has said that the figure is fluctuating. There is a fluctuating trend of jobs being lost by the farmers. Sir, whether fluctuating or non-fluctuating, it is a fact that due to the floods, farmers lose their jobs. So, my specific question, through you, to the hon. Minister is, what is the comprehensive planning to provide them some relief on behalf of the Government of India? This is my specific question to the hon. Minister.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: As I have said, through the Calamity Relief Fund and the National Calamity Contingency Fund a specific amount has been provided to every State when they face this type of calamity. The monetary support is essentially provided to the affected people that includes landless labourers and farmers also. Certain amount of money has been provided; up to a certain quantity of foodgrains has also been provided; and some other relief has also been provided. And, this is the uniform policy for the whole country where this type of natural calamity regularly occurs.

*85. [The questioner (SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL) was absent. For answer *vide* page *23...infra.]*

Assessment of passenger traffic requirements

*86. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have assessed the passenger traffic requirements of the Hyderabad-Tirupathi and Hyderabad-Visakhapatnam section for the year 2007-08 and projected figures for 2008-09;